THEOSOPHY

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Occultism does not accept anything inorganic in the Kosmos. ALL IS LIFE, *and every atom of even mineral dust is a* LIFE, *though beyond our comprehension and perception, because it is outside the range of the laws known to those who reject Occultism.*

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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AUM

Only one Fact there is—Immortal Life. From Life we came, in Life we live and move, to Life we go—bearing with us ever to other planes or states or places the Life we are. —*The Book of Images*

THEOSOPHY

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KNOWLEDGE AND HUMAN DESTINY

H.P.B.'s remark in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 110), that the civilized nations have made of selfishness an ethical characteristic, deserves exploration and development. What does she mean? If ethics is the science which identifies and pursues what is good, how can selfishness be an ethical characteristic?

One way of understanding this elevation of selfishness to ethical standing would be to see it as a natural result of the evolutionary doctrine which declares that in the struggle for existence, only the fittest survive. In this conflict, only the self-interest of the organism is at issue, so that if survival, as in modern evolutionary theory, is the highest good, then the ruthless selfishness which fights for survival may be called an ethical characteristic. A psychic extension of this outlook may be recognized in the present-day emphasis on "self-expression." By some schools of psychology, self-expression has been made into the purpose of life. Although some sort of individual expression may be necessary to all incarnated intelligence, the meaning of this idea in contemporary thinking seems to displace all other conceptions of purpose. That we are primarily here to learn is seldom considered save as an aspect of self-expression. That humans may have a great and self-sacrificing work to perform—the Promethean mission of the Manasa-Putras—is not even imagined.

There are two reasons for this focus on self. One is the simple fact of incarnation. The higher ego, H.P.B. makes plain, can have no part in this world save through the agency of the personality, or "the body of egotistical desires and personal Will," the union

of mind and desire being necessary "for purposes of a *full* terrestrial existence." (*S.D.* II, 241-42.) It is this terrestrial *false* personality which imagines that only its desires have meaning and are good. Selfishness is thus the result of the delusion of material existence. This being the case, there is no mystery about biological and psychological rationalizations of selfishness. They are to be expected in an age which believes that matter is all.

The Secret Doctrine, however, shows that from the beginning there was a counter-force in human striving, pointing to the spiritual side and meaning of life. In a passage on the religious ethics of the early races of mankind, H.P.B. writes:

> What was the religion of the Third and Fourth Races? In the common acceptation of the term, neither the Lemurians, nor yet their progeny, the Lemuro-Atlanteans, had any, as they knew no dogma, nor had they to believe *on faith.* No sooner had the mental eye of man been opened to understanding, than the Third Race felt itself one with the ever-present as the ever to be unknown and invisible ALL, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with divine powers, and feeling in himself his *inner* God, each felt he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the "Sons of Light." Those who fell victims to their lower natures, became the slaves of matter. (*S.D.* II, 272.)

In this passage, two "struggles" are described as natural to man—that between the spiritual and the psychic, and that between the psychic and the physical. These, we may think, are both "struggles for existence" in which the incarnated ego is involved. What are they?

Later in the same volume H.P.B. remarks that "there never was an *original* sin, but only an abuse of physical intelligence—the psychic being guided by the animal, and both putting out the light of the spiritual." (II, 413.) Here the psychic may be recognized as the middle principle of Kama-Manas, in which egotism and selfishness are joined and focused, while the physical is the organism whose drives are distorted and abused in various ways by the self-seeking *psyche.* The organism, like Dhritarashtra in the *Gita,* is manipulated by the personality, having no choice but to go where it is led.

The arena of the struggle between the psychic and the spiritual is the mind. The struggle is the admission price paid by the ego for action on this plane. As H.P.B. says in "Psychic and Noetic Action," the Personal Mind, through which the Higher Mind-Entity must work on earth, is of the substance of the Astral Light. "Thus, while its inner constitution is Manasic, its 'body,' or rather functioning essence, is heterogeneous, and leavened with the Astral Light." The "struggle" is now defined: "It is a part of the mission of the Manasic Ray, to get gradually rid of the blind, deceptive element which, though it makes of it an active spiritual entity on this plane, still brings it into so close contact with matter as to entirely becloud its divine nature and stultify its intuitions."

From this we may turn to Plato's account of the struggle, as explained by H.P.B. in "Old Philosophers and Modern Critics":

> Plato acknowledges man to be the toy of the element of necessity—which is Karma under another name—in appearing in this world of matter. Man is influenced by external causes, and these causes are *daimonia,* like that of Socrates. Happy is the man physically pure, for if his external soul (astral body, the image of the body) is pure, it will strengthen the second (the lower Manas), or the soul which is termed by him the higher mortal soul, which, though liable to err from its own motives, will always side with reason against the animal proclivities of the body. In other words, the ray of our Higher Ego, the lower Manas, has its higher light, the reason or rational powers of the Nous, to help it in the struggle with Kamic desires.

The reason for purity is nowhere more clearly put. The capacity of reason to cope with the animal proclivities depends upon the support provided by a purified personal nature. It is to reason above all that *The Secret Doctrine* makes its appeal, in conformity to the present cycle of human development. As Mr. Judge says in "The Synthesis of Occult Science":

> The writings of Plato are carefully veiled in the symbolical language of initiation. The *Secret Doctrine,* coming more than two millenniums later, and in an age of so-called Science, is addressed to the Scientific thought of the age, and hence considers the whole subject largely from the standpoint of Science. The present age is as deficient in philosophy as was the age of Plato in knowledge of science. It follows, therefore, that while the Secret Doctrine itself apprehends equally both philosophy and science, in addressing itself to the thought of an age it

> must recognize here, as it does everywhere, the *law of cycles* that rules in the intellectual development of a race no less than in the revolutions of suns and worlds, and so address the times from that plane of thought that is in the ascendant. It is just because analytical thought is in the ascendant, because it is the *thought-form* of the age, that the great majority of readers are likely to overlook the broad synthesis and so miss the philosophy of the Secret Doctrine. The only object of these brief and fragmentary papers has been to call attention to this point.

A point to be noted here is that the ancient Greeks made little distinction between reason and science. Unlike modern science, ancient science was not contemptuous of abstract thinking, it being recognized that without reason there can be no science at all, since the presentations of the senses require the distinguishing order which reason is able to provide. In addressing the scientific thought of the age, then, H.P.B. sought a basic reform in scientific attitudes through demonstration of the dependence of science on metaphysical as well as other forms of reason.

What then of Ethics? Ethics is the foundation of all philosophy, and the higher, informing principle of reason. Interpretations of the evidence given by the senses change from year to year, even from day to day, and their only value is in leading to the discovery, which must come sooner or later, that everything known to empirical science is relative and subject to continual replacement. Even doctrines approximating the hidden aspects of man's nature will undergo change, especially when there is growth in human understanding and increased capacity to recognize the subtleties of the inner principles of things. A concluding paragraph in H.P.B.'s Third Message to the American Theosophists makes this plain:

> What I said last year remains true today, that is, that the Ethics of Theosophy are more important than any divulgement of psychic laws and facts. The latter relate wholly to the material and evanescent part of the septenary man, but the Ethics sink into and take hold of the real man—the reincarnating Ego. We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal. Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practice, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming races. Do not work merely for the Theosophical Society, but *through* it for Humanity.

What do people commonly understand by Ethics? It seems to mean, for the most part, doing good for others, while feeling respect for them and all forms of life. This is hardly inaccurate, but the close association made by H.P.B. of ethics with Karma and Reincarnation deepens the content. In order to do good for others, we need to understand their natures. Karma and Reincarnation throw a great light on the nature, needs, and purposes of human beings. It also illuminates our own natures. Ethics, as popularly understood, means a kind of "sympathy." An ethical feeling is a feeling for the good of others. But what is their good, and how shall we decide what to do if there are those whose idea of the good is different from ours?

In a question published with Mr. Judge's answer in the *Theosophical Forum* for September, 1893, the inquirer asks, "Is sympathy a quality of Kama?" Mr. Judge replies:

> Sympathy comes from *kama* sometimes, and is sometimes derived from other parts of our constitution. It is often a disease with unintelligent persons, or in those who have not disciplined their minds and do not use their judgment or whose judgment is deficient. But sympathy in its highest aspect must flow from the spiritual part of our nature. However, I think that in its ordinary exhibition it is derived from the principle of desire acting with the mind, the memory, and the sensations. Very often it is false; but true sympathy can never be false, and no matter what principle in our nature it arises from, being a noble and healthful thing, it should be exercised, always however with judgment.
>
> It would certainly be folly to allow our sympathies to carry us so away that we are plunged ourselves into needless sorrow, for in such case we will lose power to judge how to be able to act for the benefit of others.

The stage is now set for further inquiry into the meaning of ethics. By dictionary definition, it is a "discipline"—the study of what is right to do and why. Ethics is, then, an aspect of knowledge. But for the members of the third race which first experienced the illumination of mind, what we term ethics was not theory but act. They felt their unity with the source of their being. Their lives, we could say, were lived by the light of spontaneous spiritual perception. "Was not their childhood passed with, nursed and tendered by those who had given them life and called them forth to intelligent, conscious life?"

It was the "Golden Age" in those days of old, the age

> when the "gods walked the earth, and mixed freely with the mortals." Since then, the gods departed (*i.e.*, became invisible), and later generations ended by worshipping their kingdoms—the Elements. (*S.D.* II, 273.)

The worship that followed, H.P.B. says, became *self-worship,* and mankind was thereupon divided into the righteous and the unrighteous. The anthropomorphic religions came into being, a development which led, ages later, to the aggressive Materialism which characterized the birth of modern science, and to rejection of any sort of moral thinking or reasoning, since the perversions of religion had become so extreme that men in whom reason was active would have nothing to do with it.

H.P.B. showed a similar disdain for these perversions, but instead of denying the spiritual and ignoring the ethical side of man's nature, she explained the truth that had once been known concerning the origin of Man. She said in one place: "As the whole philosophy of the problem of evil hangs upon the correct comprehension of the constitution of the *inner* being of nature and man, of the divine within the animal, and hence also the correctness of the whole system as given in these pages, with regard to the crown piece of evolution—MAN—we cannot take sufficient precautions against theological subterfuges." (II, 476.) She wrote concerning the theological idea of the Fall:

> The legend of the "Fallen Angels" in its esoteric signification, contains the key to the manifold contradictions of human character; it points to the secret of man's self-consciousness; it is the angle-iron on which hinges his entire life-cycle —the history of his evolution and growth. . . . The "Fallen Angels," so-called, are *Humanity itself.* The Demon of Pride, Lust, Rebellion, and Hatred, has never had *any being before* the appearance of physical conscious man. (II, 274.)
>
> The gift of Prometheus thus became a CURSE—though *foreknown* and *foreseen* by the HOST personified in that personage, as his name well shows. It is in this that rests, at one and the same time, its sin and its redemption. For the Host that incarnated in a portion of humanity, though led to it by Karma or *Nemesis,* preferred free-will to passive slavery, intellectual self-conscious pain and even torture—"while myriad time shall flow"—to inane, imbecile, instinctual beatitude. Knowing such an incarnation was premature and not in the programme of nature, the heavenly host, "Prometheus," still sacrificed itself to benefit thereby, at least, one portion of mankind. But while saving man from mental darkness, they inflicted upon him the

> tortures of the self-consciousness of his responsibility—the result of his free will—besides every ill to which mortal man and flesh are heir to. . . . Spiritual evolution being incapable of keeping pace with the physical, once its homogeneity was broken by the admixture, the gift thus became the chief cause, if not the sole origin of *Evil*. (*S.D.* II, 420-21.)

Here the power of reason is made to illuminate the dark mysteries of human experience. The patience which ethical feeling inspires is given rational foundation through a grasp of the history and meaning of the human condition. It is by *knowledge* that we become able to understand our own feelings and the pain and longing of others. And it is by knowledge, again, that we are able to recognize and appreciate the compassion of those Promethean souls who are, eternally and steadfastly, the Teachers of mankind. Through knowledge of ourselves—the key to which lies in the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation—we have at least the means of translating ethical theory into act, and begin our return to that sublime state in which the first races lived their lives, while having at the same time full consciousness of all the weary millennia of struggle throughout the past.

We begin, as Mr. Judge suggests in his *Forum* answer, with the feeling of brotherhood, but we need knowledge to give it expression in ways that help, that do not hurt. Motive is primary, but motive wastes or goes awry without knowledge of the complexities which only occult science and history can supply. So Ethics, in Theosophy, is inseparable from teachings of the nature of man—about the potential god who takes an animal body, although in human form—a god-in-the-making who works out his destiny through a long course of discovery and remembering what he has come to earth to do. The will to accomplish this herculean task is the primeval desire that brought the whole universe into being. The wisdom of how to do it is the teaching of the Adepts. This is the wisdom of which H.P.B. speaks in her Message to the American Theosophists—which takes hold of the real man—the Reincarnating Ego.

THE GRAND INQUISITOR

II

SUCH is the secret meaning of 'temptation' the first, and that is what Thou hast rejected in the wilderness for the sake of that freedom which Thou hast prized above all. Meanwhile, Thy tempter's offer contained another great world-mystery. By accepting the 'bread', Thou wouldst have satisfied and answered a universal craving, a ceaseless longing alive in the heart of every individual human being, lurking in the breast of mankind taken collectively, namely, that most perplexing problem—'whom or what shall we worship'? There exists no greater nor more painful an anxiety for a man who has freed himself from all religious bias, than to find as soon as he can a new object or idea to worship. But man seeks to bow before that only, which is recognized as having a right to worship by the greater majority, if not by all his fellow-men; whose rights are so unquestionable that men agree unanimously to bow down to it. For, the chief concern of these miserable creatures is not to find and worship the idol of their own choice, but to discover that which all others will believe in, and consent to bow down to in a mass, and all together. It is that instinctive need of having a worship *in common* that is the chief suffering of every man individually, the chief concern of mankind from the beginning of times. It is for that universality of religious worship that people destroyed each other by sword. Creating gods unto themselves, they forthwith began appealing to each other: 'Abandon *your* deities, come and bow down to *ours,* or else death to ye and to your idols!' And so will they do till the end of this world; they will do so even then, when all the gods will themselves have disappeared, for then men will prostrate themselves before and worship some idea. Thou didst know, Thou couldst not be ignorant of that fundamental mysterious principle in human nature, and still Thou hast rejected the only absolute banner offered Thee, to which would remain true, and before which would have bowed, all the nations—the banner of the *earthly bread,* rejected in the name of freedom and of 'bread in the kingdom of God!' Behold then, what Thou hast done furthermore for that 'freedom's' sake! I repeat to Thee, man has no

greater anxiety in life than to find some one to whom he can make over that gift of freedom with which the unfortunate creature is born. But it is he alone who will prove capable of silencing and quieting their conscience that will succeed in possessing himself of the freedom of men. Together with 'daily bread' an irresistible power was offered Thee: show a man 'bread,' and he will follow Thee, for what can he resist less than the attraction of bread? but if, at the same time, some one else but Thee succeeds in possessing himself of his conscience—oh, then, even Thy bread will be forgotten, and man will follow him who seduced his conscience. So far Thou wert right. For the mystery of human being does not solely rest in the desire to live, but in the problem—what should he live for at all! Without a clear perception of his reasons for living, man will never consent to live, and will rather destroy himself than tarry on earth, though he be surrounded with breads. That is so; but what happens: instead of getting hold of man's freedom, Thou hast enlarged it still more! Hast Thou again forgotten that rest and even death are preferable to man to a free choice between the knowledge of GOOD and EVIL? Nothing seems more seductive in his eyes than freedom of conscience and nothing proves more painful. And behold! instead of laying a firm foundation to rest once forever on it man's conscience—Thou hast chosen to stir up in him all that is abnormal, mysterious, and indefinite, all that is beyond human strength, and hast acted, therefore, as if Thou never didst have any love for them—and yet, Thou wert He who came to 'lay down his life for his friends!' Thou has burdened man's soul with anxieties hitherto unknown to him. Thirsting for human love freely given, seeking to enable man seduced and charmed by Thee to follow Thy path of his own free-will; instead of the old and wise Law which held him in subjection, Thou hast given him the right to henceforth choose and freely decide what is good and bad for him, guided in that but by Thine image in his heart. . . . But hast Thou never dreamt of the probability, nay—of the certainty of that same man rejecting finally one day, and controverting even Thine image and Thine Truth, once he would find himself laden with such a terrible burden as freedom of choice? That a time would surely come when men would exclaim that Truth and Light cannot be in Thee, for no one could have left them in a greater perplexity and mental suffering than Thou hast done, lading them with so many cares and insolvable problems. Thus,

it is Thyself who hast laid the foundation to the destruction of Thine own kingdom and no one but Thee is to be blamed for it.

Meantime, every chance of success was offered Thee. There are three Powers, three unique Forces upon earth, capable of conquering forever by charming the conscience of these weak rebels—men—for their own good; and these forces are: MIRACLE, MYSTERY and AUTHORITY. Thou hast rejected all the three, and thus wert the first to set them an example. When the terrible and All-Wise Spirit placed Thee on a pinnacle of the temple and saith unto Thee—'If Thou be the son of God, cast thyself down' for it is written—'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash Thy foot against a stone!'—for, thus, Thy faith in Thy father should be made evident, Thou didst refuse to accept his suggestion and didst not follow it. Oh, undoubtedly, Thou hast acted in this with all the magnificent pride of a god, but then men—that weak and rebel race—are they also gods, to understand Thy refusal? Of course, Thou didst well know that by taking one single step forward, by making the slightest motion to throw Thyself down, Thou wouldst have tempted 'the Lord, Thy God', lost suddenly all faith in Him, and dashed Thyself to atoms against that same earth which Thou camest to save, and thus wouldst have allowed the Wise Spirit which tempted Thee to triumph and rejoice. But then, how many such as Thee are to be found on this globe, I ask Thee? . . . Couldst Thou ever for a moment imagine that men would have the same strength for resisting such a temptation? Is human nature calculated to reject miracle, and trust during the most terrible moments in life, when the most momentous, painful and perplexing problems struggle within man's soul—to the free decisions of his heart for true solution? Oh, Thou knewest well that that action of Thine would remain recorded in books for ages to come, reaching to the confines of the globe, and Thy hope was, that following Thy example, man would remain true to his God, without needing any miracle to keep his faith alive! But Thou knewest not, it seems, that no sooner would man reject miracle than he would reject God likewise, for he seeketh less God than 'a sign' from Him. And, thus, as it is beyond the power of man to remain without miracles, then, rather than live without, he will create for himself new wonders, of his own making that once; and he will bow to and worship the soothsayer's miracles, the old witch's sorcery, were

he a rebel, an heretic and an atheist hundred times over. Thy refusal to come down from the Cross when people mocking and wagging their heads were saying to Thee—'Save Thyself if Thou be the son of God, and we will believe in Thee'—was due to the same determination—not to enslave man through miracle, but to obtain faith in Thee freely and apart from any miraculous influence. Thou thirstest for free and uninfluenced love, and refusest the passionate adoration of the slave before a Potency which would have subjected his will once forever. Thou judgest of men too highly here, again, for, though rebels they be, they are born slaves and nothing more. Behold, and judge of them once more, now that fifteen centuries have elapsed since that moment. . . . Look at them, whom Thou hadst tried to elevate unto Thee! . . . I swear, man is weaker and lower than Thou hast ever imagined him to be! Can he ever do that, which Thou art said to have accomplished? By valuing him so highly, Thou hast acted as if there was no love for him in Thine heart, for Thou hast demanded of him more than he could ever give, Thou —who lovest him more than Thyself! Hadst Thou esteemed him less, less wouldst Thou have demanded of him, and that would be more like love, as his burden would have been made thereby lighter. Man is weak and cowardly. What matters it, if he now riots and rebels throughout the world against OUR will and power, and prides himself upon that rebellion? It is but the petty pride and vanity of a school-boy. It is the rioting of little children, getting up a mutiny in the class-room and driving out of it their school-master. But it will not last long, and when the day of their triumph is over, they will have to pay dearly for it. They will destroy the temples and rase them to the ground, flooding the earth with blood. But the foolish children will have to learn some day, that rebels though they be, and riotous from nature, they are too weak to maintain the spirit of mutiny for any length of time. Suffused with idiotic tears, they will confess that He who created them rebellious had undoubtedly done so but to mock them. They will pronounce these words in despair, and such blasphemous utterances will but add to their misery, for human nature cannot endure blasphemy and takes her own revenge at the end. . . .

And thus, after all Thou hast suffered for mankind and its freedom, the present fate of men may be summed up in three words: Unrest, Confusion, Misery! Thy great prophet John re-

cords in his vision, as having seen during the first resurrection, of the chosen servants of God—'the number of them which were sealed' in their foreheads 'twelve thousand' of every tribe. But were they, indeed, as many? Then they must have been gods, not men. They had shared Thy Cross for long years, suffered scores of years hunger and thirst in dreary wilderness and deserts, feeding upon locusts and roots—and of these children of free love for Thee, and self-sacrifice in Thy name, Thou mayest well feel proud. But remember that these are but a few thousand—of gods, not men—and how about all others? And why should the weakest be held guilty for not being able to endure what the strongest have? Why should a soul incapable of containing such terrible gifts be punished for its weakness? Didst Thou really come but to, and for, the 'Elect' alone? If so, then the mystery will remain forever one to our finite minds. And if a mystery, then were we right to proclaim it as one, and preach it, teaching them that neither their freely given love to Thee nor freedom of conscience were essential, but only that incomprehensible mystery which they have to blindly obey even *against* the dictates of their conscience. Thus did we do. We corrected and improved Thy teaching and based it upon 'MIRACLE, MYSTERY, and AUTHORITY.' And men rejoiced at finding themselves *led* once more like a herd of cattle, and to find their hearts at last delivered of the terrible burden laid upon them by Thee and which caused them so much suffering. Say, were we right in doing as we did? Did not we show our great love for humanity, by realizing in such an humble spirit its helplessness, by so mercifully lightening for it its great burden, and by permitting and remitting its weak nature, every sin provided it be committed with our authorization? What for hast Thou then come again to trouble us in our work? Any why lookest Thou at me so penetratingly with Thy meek eyes, and in such a silence? Rather, Thou shouldst feel wroth, for I need not Thy love, I reject it, and love Thee not, myself. Why should I conceal the truth from Thee? I know but too well, with whom I am now talking! What I had to say was known to Thee before, I read it in Thy eye. How should I conceal from Thee OUR SECRET? Perchance, Thou wouldst hear it from my own lips, then listen: WE ARE NOT WITH THEE, BUT WITH HIM, and that is our Secret! For centuries have we abandoned Thee to follow *Him,* yes—just eight centuries. Eight hundred years, now, since we accepted from *Him* the gift rejected by Thee with indignation; that last

gift which he offered Thee from the high mountain, when showing all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. He saith unto Thee—'All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.' We took Rome from him and the glaive of Cæsar and declared ourselves alone the kings of this earth, its sole kings, though our work is not yet fully accomplished. But who is to blame for it? Our work is but in its incipient stage, but it is nevertheless started. We may have long to wait until its culmination, and mankind have to suffer much, but we will reach the goal some day, and become sole Cæsars, and then will be the time to think of universal happiness for men. . . .

Thou couldst accept the glaive of Cæsar Thyself, why didst Thou reject the offer? By accepting from the powerful Spirit his third offer Thou wouldst have realized every aspiration man seeketh for himself on earth; namely, man would have found a constant object for worship; one to deliver his conscience to, and the means to unite all together into one common and harmonious ant-hill, as an instinctive necessity for universal unity constitutes a third and final suffering of mankind. Humanity, in its whole, has ever aspired to unite itself universally. Many were the great nations with great histories, but the greater they were, the more unhappy they felt, as they felt the necessity of a universal union among men—the stronger, Great conquerors—like Timoor and Tchengiskhan—passed like a cyclone upon the face of the earth in their efforts to conquer the universe, but even they, albeit unconsciously, expressed the same aspiration towards universal and common unity. In accepting the kingdom of the world, and Cæsar's purple, one will be founding a universal kingdom and securing to mankind eternal peace. And who can rule mankind better than those who have possessed themselves of man's conscience, and held in their hand man's daily bread? Having accepted Cæsar's glaive and purple, we had, of course, but to deny Thee, to henceforth follow *Him* alone. Oh! Centuries of intellectual riot and rebellious Free-Thought are yet before us, and their Science will end by anthropophagy, for having begun to build their Babylonian Tower without *our* help they will have to end by anthropophagy. . . . But it is precisely at that time, that the Beast will crawl up to us in full submission, and it will lick the soles of our feet, and sprinkle them with tears of blood. And we will sit upon the scarlet-coloured Beast, and lifting up high

the *golden cup* 'full of abomination and filthiness' will show written upon it the word 'MYSTERY'. But it is only then, that men will see the beginning of a kingdom of peace and happiness. Thou art proud of Thine own Elect, but Thou hast none other but these Elect, and we—we will give rest to all. But that is not the end. Many are those among Thy elect and labourers of Thy Vineyard, who, tired of waiting for Thy coming—already have and will yet carry the great fervor of their hearts and their spiritual strength unto another field, and will end by lifting up against Thee Thy own Banner of *Freedom*. But it is Thyself Thou hast to thank. Under our rule and sway every one will be happy and will neither rebel nor destroy each other everywhere, as they did while under Thy *free* Banner. Oh, we will take good care to prove to them that only then will they become absolutely free, when they will have abjured their freedom in our favour and submit to us as absolutely. Thinkest Thou we will be right or will be lying still? They will convince themselves of this, for they will see what a depth of degrading slavery and strife that Liberty of Thine has led them into. Liberty, Freedom of Thought and Conscience, and Science will lead them into such impassable chasms, they will place them face to face before such wonders and insoluble mysteries that some of them—more rebellious and ferocious—will destroy themselves; others—rebellious but weak—will destroy each other; while the remaining weak, helpless and miserable will crawl back to our feet, and cry 'Yes; right were ye, oh Fathers, of Jesus; ye alone are in possession of His mystery, and we return to you, praying that you should save us from ourselves!' Receiving their bread from us, they will clearly see that we take the bread from them, the bread made by their own hands, but to give it back to them in equal shares and that without any miracle; and having ascertained that, if we have not changed stones into breads, yet bread they have, while every other bread, turned verily in their own hands into stones—they will be too glad to have it so. Until that day, they will never be happy. And who is it, who helped the most to blind them, tell me? Who separated the flock and scattered it over ways unknown if it be not Thee? But we will gather the sheep once more and subject them to our will forever. We will prove to them their own weakness and make them humble again, whilst with Thee they have learnt but pride, for Thou hast made more of them than they ever were worth. We will give them that quiet, humble hap-

piness, which alone benefits such weak, foolish creatures as they are, and having once proved to them their weakness, they will become timid and obedient, and gather around us as chickens around their hen. They will wonder at and feel a superstitious admiration for us, and feel proud to be led by such powerful and wise men that a handful of them could subject a flock—thousand millions headstrong. Gradually men will begin to fear us. They will nervously dread our slightest anger, their intellects will weaken, their eyes become as easily accessible to tears as those of children and women, but we will teach them an easy transition from grief and tears to laughter, childish joy, and joyous song. Yes; we will make them work like slaves, but during their recreation hours, they will have an innocent child-like life, full of play and merry laughter. We will even *permit them* SIN, for weak and helpless, they will feel the more love for us for permitting them to indulge in it. We will tell them that every kind of sin will be remitted to them, so long as it is done with our permission; that we take all these sins upon ourselves, for we so love the world, that we are even willing to sacrifice our souls for its satisfaction. And, appearing before them in the light of their scape-goats and redeemers, they will adore us the more for it. They will have no secrets from us. It will remain with us to permit them to live with their wives and concubines, or to forbid it to them, to have any children or remain fatherless—either way depending on the degree of their obedience to us—and they will submit most joyfully to us. The most agonizing secrets of their souls—all, all will they lay down at our feet, and we will authorize and remit them all in Thy name, and they will believe us and accept our mediation with rapture as it will deliver them from their greatest anxiety and their present tortures of having to decide freely for themselves. And all will be happy, all except the one or two hundred thousands of their rulers. For it is but we, we the keepers of the great MYSTERY who will be miserable. There will be thousands of millions of happy infants, and one hundred thousand martyrs who will have taken upon themselves the curse of knowledge of Good and Evil. Peaceable will be their end, and peacefully will they die, in Thy name, to find behind the portals of the grave—but DEATH. . . . But we will keep the secret inviolate, and deceive them for their own good with the mirage of life eternal in Thy kingdom. For, were there really anything like life beyond the grave, surely it would never fall to the lot of such as they! People tell us and prophesy of Thy

coming and triumphing once more on earth; of Thy appearing with the army of Thy elect, with Thy proud and mighty ones, but we will answer Thee, if so, that they have saved but themselves while we have saved all. We are also threatened with the great disgrace which awaits the Whore—'BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS'—who sits upon the Beast, holding in her hands the MYSTERY, the word written upon her forehead; and we are told that the weak ones, the *lambs* will rebel against her and shall make her desolate and naked. But then will I arise, and point to Thee the thousands of millions of happy infants free from any sin. And we who have taken their sins upon us, for their own good, we will stand before Thee and say: 'Judge us if Thou canst and darest!'! Know then that I fear Thee not. Know that I too have lived in the dreary wilderness, where I fed upon locusts and roots, that I too have blessed the Freedom with which Thou hast blest men, and that I too have been once preparing to join the ranks of Thy elect, the proud and the mighty. . . . But I awoke from my delusion and refused since then to serve INSANITY. I returned to join the legion of those *who were correcting Thy mistakes*. I left the Proud and returned to the really humble, and for their own happiness. What I now tell Thee will come to pass, and our kingdom will be built I tell Thee, not later than tomorrow. Thou wilt see that obedient flock which at one simple motion of my hand will rush to add burning coals to Thy stake, on which I will burn Thee for having dared to come and trouble us in our work. For, if there ever was one who deserved more than any of the others our Inquisitorial Fires—it is Thee! . . . *Tomorrow* I will burn Thee. *Dixi*"

Ivan paused. He had entered into the situation and had spoken with great animation, but now he suddenly burst out laughing.

"But . . . all that is absurd!" suddenly exclaimed Alyosha, who had hitherto listened perplexed and agitated but in profound silence. "Your poem is a praise to Christ, not an accusation . . . as you, perhaps, wanted it to be. And who will believe you when speaking of 'freedom' and . . . is it so, that we, Christians, have to understand it? . . . It is Rome, and not even all Rome, for it would be unjust—but the worst of the Roman Catholics, the Inquisitors, and the Jesuits that you have been exposing! . . . Your Inquisitor is an impossible character. What are these sins that they are taking upon themselves? Who are those keepers of mys-

tery who took upon themselves a curse for the good of mankind? Who ever met them? We all know the Jesuits, and no one has a good word to say in their favor, but when were they as you depict them? Never . . . never! . . . The Jesuits are merely a Romish army making ready for their future temporal kingdom, with a mitred Emperor—a Roman High Priest at their head . . . that is their ideal, and object, without any mystery or an elevated suffering. . . . The most prosaical thirsting for power, for the sake of terrestrial and dirty pleasures of life, a desire for enslaving their fellow-men . . . something like our late system of serfs with themselves at their head as landed proprietors . . . that is all that they can be accused of. They may not believe in God . . . that is also possible, but your suffering Inquisitor is simply—a fancy!"

"Hold, hold," interrupted Ivan smiling. "Do not be so excited. A fancy, you say, be it so! Of course, it is a fancy. But stop. Do you really imagine that all that Catholic movement during the last centuries is naught but a desire of power for the only achievement of 'dirty pleasures?' Is this what your Father Paissiy taught you?"

"No, no, quite the reverse, for Father Paissiy once told me something very similar to what you yourself say . . . though, of course, not that. . . . Something quite different" . . . suddenly added Alexis, blushing.

"A precious information, notwithstanding your 'not that.' I ask you, why should the inquisitors and the Jesuits of your imagination live but for the attainment of 'dirty' material pleasures? Why should there not be found among them one single genuine martyr, suffering under a great and holy idea and loving humanity with all his heart? Now, let us suppose that among all these Jesuits thirsting and hungering but after 'material dirty pleasures' there may be one, just one like my old Inquisitor, who had himself fed upon roots in the wilderness, suffered the tortures of damnation while trying to conquer flesh, all that in order to become free and perfect, but who had never ceased to love humanity, and who one day prophetically beheld the truth; who saw as plain as he could see that the bulk of humanity could never be happy under the old system, that it was not for them that the great Idealist had come and died and dreamt of his Universal Harmony. Having realized that truth, he returned into the

world and joined—intelligent and practical people. Is this so impossible?"

"Joined whom, what intelligent and practical people?" exclaimed Alyosha quite excited. "Why should they be more intelligent than other men, and what secrets and mysteries *can* they have! . . . They have neither . . . Atheism and infidelity is all the secret they have. Your Inquisitor does not believe in God, and that is all the Mystery there is to it!"

"May be. And you have guessed rightly there. And it is so, just so, and that is his whole secret; but is this not the acutest of sufferings for such a man as he is, who killed all his young life in asceticism in the desert, and yet could not cure himself of his love toward his fellow-men? Toward the end of his life he becomes convinced that it is only by following the advices of the Great and Terrible Spirit that the fate of these millions of weak rebels, these 'half-finished samples of humanity created in mockery' can be made tolerable. And once convinced of it, he sees clearly that to achieve that object, one must follow blindly the guidance of the Wise Spirit, the fearful Spirit of Death and Destruction, hence—to accept a system of Lies and Deception and to lead humanity consciously this time toward Death and Destruction, and moreover, to be deceiving them all along the journey in order to prevent them from realizing where they are being led, and so force the miserable blind men to feel happy, at least while here on earth. And note this: a wholesale deception in the name of Him, in the ideal of whom, the old man had so passionately, so fervently believed during nearly his whole life! Is this no suffering? And were such one solitary exception found, amidst, and at the head of that army that thirsts for power for the sake of 'dirty pleasures of life,' think you one such man would not suffice to bring on a tragedy? Moreover: one single man like my Inquisitor as a principal leader, would prove sufficient to discover the real guiding idea of the Romish system with all its armies of Jesuits, the greatest and chief agents of that system. And I tell you that it is my firm conviction that the solitary type described in my poem, has at no time ever disappeared from among the chief leaders of that movement. Who knows, but that terrible old man, loving so stubbornly and in such an original way humanity, exists even in our days in the shape of a whole host of such solitary exceptions, whose existence is not due to mere chance, but

to a well-defined association born of mutual consent, to a secret league, organized several centuries back, in order to guard the MYSTERY from the indiscreet eyes of the miserable and weak people, and only in view of their own happiness. And so it is, and cannot be otherwise. I suspect that even Masons have some such MYSTERY underlying the basis of their organization, and that it is just the reason why the Roman Catholic clergy hate them so, dreading to find rivals in them, competition, the dismemberment of the unity of the idea, for the realization of which one flock and one Shepherd are needed. . . . However, in defending my idea, I look like an author, whose production is unable to stand criticism. Enough of that."

"You are, perhaps, a Mason yourself!" exclaimed Alyosha. "You do not believe in God," he added with a note of profound sadness in his voice. But suddenly remarking, that his brother was looking at him with mockery—"How do you mean then to bring your poem to a close?" he unexpectedly enquired casting his eyes downward, "or does it break there?"

"My intention is to end it with the following scene:—Having disburdened his heart, the Inquisitor waits for some time to hear his Prisoner speak in his turn. His silence weighs upon him. He saw that his captive had been attentively listening to him, all the time with his eyes fixed penetratingly and softly on the face of his Jailor and evidently bent upon not replying to him. The old man longs to hear His voice, to hear Him reply; better words of bitterness and scorn rather than His silence. Suddenly He rises; slowly and silently approaching the Inquisitor, He bends toward him and softly kisses the bloodless, four-score-and-ten—old lips. That is all the answer. The Grand Inquisitor shudders. . . . There is a convulsive twitch in a corner of his mouth. He goes to the door, opens it and addressing Him—'Go' he says—'go and return no more . . . do not come at all . . . never, never!—and—lets Him out into the dark night. . . . The Prisoner vanishes."

"And the old man?"

"The kiss burns his heart, but the old man remains firm in his own ideas and unbelief."

"And you, together with him? . . . You too!" despairingly exclaimed Alyosha, while Ivan burst out into a still louder fit of laughter.

KAMA—DESIRE

THE duality of the Kamic principle is sometimes a source of puzzlement, since it is said that Desire must be killed out, but also that there could be no human evolution without it. In *The Ocean of Theosophy,* Mr. Judge sums up at the conclusion of the chapter on Kama or Desire:

> Having thus gone over the field and shown what are the lower principles, we find Theosophy teaching that at the present point of man's evolution he is a fully developed quaternary with the higher principles partly developed. Hence it is taught that today man shows himself to be moved by passion and desire. This is proved by a glance at the civilizations of the earth, for they are all moved by this principle, and in countries like France, England, and America a glorification of it is exhibited in the attention to display, to sensuous art, to struggle for power and place, and in all the habits and modes of living where the gratification of the senses is sometimes esteemed the highest good.

In the *Theosophical Glossary* "Kama" is explained as "Evil desire, lust, volition; the cleaving to existence," and said to be "generally identified with *Mara,* the tempter." This seems consistent with Mr. Judge's statement in the *Ocean.* But "Kama" is not only a "bad" aspect of man that must be eliminated. The *Glossary* definition ("Kamadeva") says: "Kama is pre-eminently the divine desire of creating happiness and love." It is thus the primordial force which brings about existence. (*S.D.* I, 106-7.) In considering the variable and pervasive nature of the Kamic Principle as we know it, Mr. Judge observes:

> During life the emplacement of the desires and passions is, as obtains with the astral body, throughout the entire lower man, and like that ethereal counterpart of our physical person it may be added to or diminished, made weak or increased in strength, debased or purified. (*Ocean,* p. 47.)

In *Answers to Questions* (p. 248) Mr. Crosbie says:

> Astral body is merely a generic term. The term "astral" is used for everything beyond the physical. But, it should be understood that as on the physical we have earth, water, air and

> fire as divisions of this plane, so on the astral plane are similar divisions . . . the one that corresponds to water is that state of astral substance which forms the *kama-rupa.*

The connection of the astral substance and the Kamic principle of passions and desires is referred to by H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine*. Here she is speaking of the conflict arising from man's dual nature:

> The astral through Kama (desire) is ever drawing Manas down into the sphere of material passions and desires. But if the *better* man or *Manas* tries to escape the fatal attraction and turns its aspirations to Atma—Spirit—then Buddhi conquers, and carries Manas with it to the realm of eternal Spirit. (I, 244-5).

In *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 118) H.P.B. provides a further hint which may apply to Kama:

> In Occultism every qualificative change in the state of our consciousness gives to man a new aspect, and if it prevails and becomes part of the living and acting Ego, it must be (and is) given a special name, to distinguish the man in that particular state from the man he is when he places himself in another state.

The variable nature of a "principle"—variability suggesting transformation or the very meaning of human evolution—comes into focus when H.P.B. says that a "special name is needed to distinguish the man in that particular state." This is also indicated by Mr. Crosbie in the *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* (p. 197): "The psychology of the *Gita* and the ancient sages classifies the moral states, treating the mental states as mere effects produced by moral conditions." Giving a broad view of "all phases of being," H.P.B. says (*S.D.* II, 241) that it is "Manas and its vehicle—the *Kama rupa,* or body of passions and desires, the two elements of *Ahamkara* which evolve *individualized consciousness,"* showing that evolution requires mankind to work through *Kama.*

A further clarifying statement is made by Mr. Judge in his article, "Hypocrisy or Ignorance":

> The doctrines of Theosophy do not ask for nor lead to the cutting out of the human heart of every human feeling. Indeed, that is an impossibility, one would think, seeing that the feelings are an integral part of the constitution of man, for in

> the principle called *Kama*—the desires and feelings—we have the basis of all our emotions, and if it is prematurely cut out of any being, death or worse must result. It is very true that theosophy as well as all ethical systems demands that the being who has conscience and will, such as are found in man, shall control this principle of *Kama* and not be carried away by it nor be under its sway. This is self-control, mastery of the human body, steadiness in the face of affliction, but it is not extirpation of the feelings which one has to control.

When the self-conscious mind is involved in its kamic vehicle, becoming lower Manas, it inhabits a preconditioned environment. This preconditioning is the result of previous "moral states" which have produced the "mental states as mere effects." And since "every qualificative change," if it prevails, "is given a special name," the volitional principle of the lower quaternary can be recognized as not "bad" in itself, but only so through the past actions of humankind under the illusion of separateness. H.P.B. refers to Kama or desire as "instinct" in animals (*S.D.* II, 255), and it can be seen that animals obey the desires which reflect the instincts of the species. In man, however, this matrix of Kamic action—a non-self-conscious principle—is altered by the self-conscious mind-principle (Manas). Many of the choices and actions of average man, therefore, are not predetermined by instinct, but are the result of past Karma and past use of free will. They represent the inheritance of his living thought, will and feeling.

The very essence of desire is living intelligence, the mover of our world. Desire cannot be destroyed, but may be replaced by spiritual intentions, the lower being reduced to their original natural functions. Suppression alone is not redirection of desire, but a hiding from view of its appearance on the terrestrial plane. (See *S.D. II.*, 639.)

Seated in the kamic principle is the personal mind as an active principle. Recognizing that human evolution must proceed through our principles, it seems clear that suppression needs to be primarily by control of our thoughts. It is not substance that evolves. The conscious awareness of truth is the product of evolution, and this is called knowledge.

In "Psychic and Noetic Action" H.P.B. refers to the *psychic* element as *Kama-manas,* our personal mind-consciousness. Then, several pages later, she uses the term "psychic individuality,"

saying that by this "we mean that self-determining power which enables man to override circumstances," identifying it with man's character (pp. 14-15).

The term "psychic individuality" implies that the incarnated manas can be made to reflect and express the spiritual impulses of the higher Ego through the lower nature. This "power which enables man to override circumstances" is able to counteract the "collective hallucination of the whole mankind throughout the ages." As H.P.B. says: *"There is no special organ of will,* any more than there is a *physical basis* for the activities of self-consciousness." H.P.B. makes it clear that motive determines whether we will "override circumtances" or be caught up in the *"collective hallucination of the whole of mankind."* Mr. Judge refers to the need for this change by remarking that "today man shows himself to be moved by passion and desire."

The Indestructible Atom

In the grain of sand, and each atom of the human material body, the Spirit is *latent,* not active; hence being but a correlation of the highest light, something concrete as compared with the purely abstract, the atom is vitalized and energized by Spirit, without being endowed with distinct consciousness. A grain of sand, as every minutest atom, is certainly "imbued with that vital principle called Spirit"; so every atom of both, following the law of evolution, whether of objective or semi-concrete astral matter, will have to remain eternal throughout the endless cycles, indestructible in their primary elementary constituents.

—H. P. Blavatsky

letters • questions • comment

How do individuality and personality affect the "independent (conscious) existence" spoken of early in The Secret Doctrine, *in the statement of the Third Fundamental Proposition?*

Since "independent" and "conscious" are here practically interchangeable words, the key to this question is the meaning of "conscious." The term used for human consciousness is mind or *Manas,* and Manas is said to spring from *Ahamkara,* the universal principle of Self-Consciousness. (*S.D.* I, 334.) *Manas* belongs "to Heaven and Earth, and assumes the property of either." It is thus the connecting link between spirit and matter.

The distinction between Individuality and Personality is given in the *Theosophical Glossary,* Individuality being identified as the Human Higher Ego, immortal and divine, while Personality "embraces all the characteristics and memories of one physical life." Man, H.P.B. says, while having seven principles, is considered "under the three aspects of the *divine,* the *thinking* or the *rational,* and the *animal man.*" The latter, she adds, is "the lower *quaternary* or the purely astro-physical being."

Thus two poles of self-identification are open to the *thinking* man, which is *Manas* as an independent consciousness. The material embodiment of the ego is said to be a necessity of the evolving self-consciousness on this plane. "For, to complete the *septenary man,* to add to his three lower principles and cement them with the spiritual Monad—which could never dwell in such a form otherwise than in an *absolutely latent state*—two connecting principles are needed: Manas and Kama." (*S.D.* II, 79.) There is also this statement:

> *Atma-Buddhi* is dual and *Manas* is triple; inasmuch as the former has two aspects, and the latter three, *i.e.,* as a principle *per se,* which gravitates, in its higher aspect, to Atma-Buddhi, and follows, in its lower nature, *Kama,* the seat of terrestrial and animal desires and passions. Now compare the evolution

> of the Races, the First and the Second of which are of the nature of Atma-Buddhi, their passive Spiritual progeny, and the Third Root-Race shows three distinct divisions or aspects physiologically and psychically; the earliest, sinless; the middle portions awakening to intelligence; and the third and last decidedly *animal*: *i.e., Manas* succumbs to the temptations of Kama. (*S.D.* II, 254fn.)

Elsewhere H.P.B. remarks that it is only in the middle of the Fourth Round that man "develops in himself entirely the fourth principle as a fit vehicle for the fifth," adding that "Manas will be relatively *fully* developed only in the following Round, when it will have an opportunity of becoming entirely divine until the end of the Rounds." (*S.D.* II, 161-62.)

This is the course of the drama of human evolution. The incarnated ego, Manas, has threads of connection with both the higher and lower aspects of his being. He is linked to both. But to become fully incarnated, he has to be exposed to all the pervasive influences of earth-life. These influences generate the idea of the self when placed under the influence or control of material conditions. As H.P.B. puts it: "As Mahat (universal intelligence) is first born, or manifests, as Vishnu, and then, when it falls into matter and develops self-consciousness, it becomes Egoism, Selfishness, so *Manas* is of a dual nature." (*S.D.* II, 639fn.)

Yet *Manas* has intimations of its divine origin, and the great religions and philosophies of the past are filled with symbolic and sometimes more explicit teachings concerning man's true nature and his purpose on earth. Since the focus of his intelligence is now mainly on earthly things, the symbolism used is appropriate to his understanding, it being left to the intuitions of the inner man to recognize the higher meanings of what is conveyed in this way. All great literature and art is to be interpreted by this key. The form given to promulgated ideals is the one best calculated to stir the springs of spiritual knowledge in each one.

The *Gita,* for example, is the story of a great battle involving the struggle of a hero to recover his lost kingdom. This is well within the understanding of people under the cloud of Kali Yuga. The usurpation of man's life by the material forces of nature as reflected in human consciousness, is the inner meaning of the story, and Krishna stands for the presence in the human heart of the divine Ego. Since self-induced and self-devised effort is the foundation rule of all human evolution, the translation of symbolic

tales into their spiritual meaning is the work of the individual. As he pursues this task, he slowly acquires the confidence and self-reliance that eventually free him of the materializing traditions in which religio-philosophical teachings have been absorbed. So, in time, the personal consciousness—which may be said to have deep subconscious longings for reunion with its spiritual parent, the higher Manas—gains more and more of the light of higher mind. The incarnated ego begins to live a life of spirit, even while submerged in the external surroundings of physical existence. Although the personality, as the efflorescence of the material organization of physical man, tries to convert the inspiration from above into the finite goals of a single earthly lifetime, the individuality, when its voice can be heard, hints at the higher meaning of all human activity. It gives light on the possibility that: As below, so above, suggesting keys to the qualifications that must be added or applied. *The Voice of the Silence,* a work of consummate poetic beauty, has these lines:

> Behold how like the moon, reflected in the tranquil waves, Alaya is reflected by the small and by the great, is mirrored in the tiniest atoms, yet fails to reach the heart of all. Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the nonexistent!

Then follows instruction on searching for the Path.

THE TRINITY

Every dogma embodies some shade of truth to give it seeming currency. Take the theological Trinity as an instance, which has vexed the literal church from its foundation, and still perplexes its learned doctors. An intelligible psychology would interpret the mystery even to the unlearned and unprofessional. Analyze the attributes of your Personality,—that which you name yourself,—and you find herein the threefold attributes of Instinct, Intelligence, Will, incarnate in your own person,—the root plainly of the Trinitarian dogma.

—A. BRONSON ALCOTT

on the lookout

Atlantis Keeps Coming Up

The Atlantis "myth," first given currency in Western thought by Plato, has not only survived the skepticism and disdain of modern scholars, but is continually revived by the collaboration of journalists with unorthodox investigators. Hardly a year goes by without reports of new discoveries claimed as evidence that an Atlantic continent once existed, suggesting that Plato must be credited with knowledge of its civilization and its destruction by submersion beneath the sea. By such means, it may be, old traditions which preserve moral verity as well as a portion of historical truth are kept alive in the mind of the race, to serve, in future years, a deeper understanding of human history.

Plato's Purpose

Myths may conceal, but they also instruct, and the references to Plato's Atlantis in *The Secret Doctrine* often give light on the methods of the Teachers of mankind. Plato, H.P.B. says, was well acquainted with the facts of racial history and evolution, but as an Initiate could give only hints to posterity. "Aiming more to instruct as a moralist than as a geographer and ethnologist or historian," she adds, "the Greek philosopher merged the history of Atlantis, which covered several million years, into one event." (II, 760-61.) Only the last of the Atlantic islands, no longer a great continent, was described by Plato: "The last serious change occurred some 12,000 years ago, and was followed by the submersion of Plato's little Atlantic Island, which he calls Atlantis after its parent continent." (II, 8-9.)

The Atlantic Ridge

Yet he told enough to enable curious explorers and maverick scholars to find confirming evidence, year after year. A recent report along these lines appeared in the *Reader's Digest* for August, 1978, giving the conclusions of a Viennese engineer, Otto Heinrich Muck, who long ago decided that Plato's description

should be the guide of serious research. His book, *The Secret of Atlantis,* published in Germany in 1976, twenty years after the author's death, became a best seller and is now available in English from Time Books. Summarizing, the *Digest* writer says:

> Thanks to oceanography, we now have a comprehensive picture of the ocean's floor: the Atlantic is divided into two parts by a 9000-foot-high ridge that runs from Iceland in the north down just short of the Antarctic shelf in the south. In the vicinity of the Azores, this ridge becomes a massive protuberance, almost 250 miles wide, east to west, and 678 miles long, with submarine volcanic mountains in the north. (Some of the peaks pierce out of the sea. These are the Azores.) The size and shape of this undersea Azores plateau tallies to an amazing degree with Plato's description of Atlantis.

In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. quotes approvingly from Jacolliot a similar identification of the Azores as peaks of an ancient continent. (II, 222-23.)

Basques Linked With Mayans

Archæological and cultural evidence was also assembled by Muck. "He was convinced," the *Digest* says, "that the Cro-Magnons were Atlanteans, and he notes that archæologists have not discovered the origin of their advanced culture." The Cro-Magnons, described by ethnologists as "a fine race, tall in stature, large in brain, and on the whole superior to many of the existing races of mankind," were identified by H.P.B. as "offshoots of the Atlanteans." (II, 678fn.) The *Digest* writer continues:

> Muck also sees links which Atlantis, with its central position, might have created between America and the Old World. Most striking is the similarity between the pyramids of Egypt and those of Central and South America. But equally fascinating are the connections between the Basques of Spain and the Mayan Indians, who built most of the New World pyramids. Both Basques and Mayans share aquiline profiles. Although the Basque language is considered unique, Muck writes of a Basque missionary who was amazed to discover that an isolated tribe of Mayans in Guatemala understood him. Both peoples wielded similar digging sticks to loosen the ground before sowing. Pelota, the Basque national game, played by two-man teams with a small hard ball, is practically identical to the favorite sport of Mexican Indians as described by the conquering Spaniards.

Plato Vindicated

H.P.B. cites a linguist who remarks that the Basque language

has affinities only with a tongue spoken by American aborigines, and she repeats anatomical evidence linking the Basques with both the Cro-Magnons and the Guanches of the Canary Islands. (S.D. II, 790-792.) The Mayas, however, while reaching back in time to Plato's Atlantis, belonged, H.P.B. says, to the Fifth Continent. (II, 35fn.) By use of *The Secret Doctrine,* the Theosophical student has no difficulty in finding justification for Muck's determination to follow up all of Plato's testimony. Despite certain alterations, H.P.B. says, his "narrative bears the impress of truth upon it." And she quotes from Ignatius Donnelly's *Atlantis,* the first great classic on the subject, the following vindication of Plato:

> If our knowledge of Atlantis was more thorough, it would no doubt appear that in every instance wherein the people of Europe accord with the people of America, they were both in accord with the people of Atlantis. . . . It will be seen that in every case where Plato gives us information in this respect as to Atlantis, we find this agreement to exist. It existed in architecture, sculpture, navigation, engraving, writing, an established priesthood, the mode of worship, agriculture, and the construction of roads and canals; and it is reasonable to suppose that the same correspondence extended down to all the minor details. (II, 761fn.)

Axial Disturbances

Muck errs, however, in his speculations about the cause of the submersion of Atlantis. Because Plato speaks of "a deviation in their course of the stars," he thinks that an asteroid six miles in diameter struck the earth, gouging deep abysses and producing a fire storm which plunged great land masses into the sea. On this subject H.P.B. says:

> It is the submersion of the great Atlantis which is the most interesting. . . . The cataclysm which destroyed the huge continent [Lemuria] of which Australia is the largest relic, was due to a series of subterranean convulsions and the breaking asunder of the ocean floors. That which put an end to its successor [Atlantis]—the fourth continent—was brought on by successive disturbances in axial rotation. It began during the earliest tertiary periods, and, continuing for long ages, carried away successively the last vestige of Atlantis, with the exception, perhaps, of Ceylon and a small portion of what is now Africa. It changed the face of the globe, and no memory of its flourishing continents and isles, of its civilizations and sciences.

remained in the annals of history, save in the Sacred records of the East.

Proofs Will Come

> Hence, Modern Science denies Atlantis and its existence. It even denies any violent shiftings of the Earth's axis, and would attribute the reason for the change of climates to other causes. (II, 314.)

Muck, however, also attributes to the devastation of the cataclysm "the loss of the memory of Atlantis." In his view, by the time mankind regained the rudiments of civilization, "Atlantis was only a name." Today, however, it is a name to conjure with, and as H.P.B. wrote a century ago, "the day is approaching when the world will receive proofs that only ancient religions were in harmony with nature, and ancient science embraced all that can be known." Sometimes popular magazines such as *Reader's Digest* do a great deal to increase the readiness of countless people to recognize and accept such proofs, when the time comes for them to be given.

A Natural Question

The August, 1978 issue of *American Theosophist,* journal of the Theosophical Society in America, published an informative interview with Geddes MacGregor, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern California, on the subject of reincarnation. Dr. MacGregor said that he was himself convinced of the likelihood or truth of this teaching, and had been interested in the idea since he was fifteen. From his knowledge of the Bible and early Christian history, he pointed out that many Gnostic ideas were in the air during the first centuries of our era, and that reincarnation might well have been taken for granted by the people of that time. He said:

> There is no explicit mention of reincarnation in the Bible, but then I like to point out that there is no specific mention of the Trinity either. . . . There are several doctrines of immortality in the New Testament running side by side. But if you take a passage like John 9:1 where Jesus and the disciples meet a man who was born blind and the disciples ask, "What is the matter? What gives here?" they are saying in effect, "Was it his parents who sinned? Was the sin hereditary, therefore having a congenital effect biologically? Or was it the man himself?" They obviously had in mind some notion of the man himself

> having sinned in some previous life, because if he was born blind there must have been a previous existence for the blindness to have been his own doing. This is evidence of something that seemed extremely likely, to say the very least, amongst the gnostic ideas (which are really theosophical ideas) that were around at the time of Jesus. It brings out the notion that the disciples had this in their minds and so quite naturally asked the question. It's the sort of question that would seem natural if people were thinking along lines of that kind.

Not a Heresy at All!

Dr. MacGregor suggested that in the time of Justinian, when the Church Anathema was pronounced against reincarnation or pre-existence, the Christians were weak in philosophical thinking and were upset by the profundity and subtlety of the thought of Origen, who was singled out as the source of heretical teaching. The interview concludes with these observations by the philosophy professor:

> There are so many factors in this that it would be very difficult to go over it all in an answer to a question, but it is undoubtedly the case that around the sixth century the final nails went into reincarnation's coffin, so to speak, as far as Christianity is concerned, and after that it was no longer fashionable to talk about reincarnation at all. It becomes associated with heretical sects like the Bogomils and Albigenses and so on, but there is, in my view, no reason why that should be so. Even Cardinal Mercier, a Belgian Cardinal, who lived about the turn of the century and later, thought there was another reason why reincarnation should be regarded as not heretical at all. He said explicitly to a Polish professor, a Roman Catholic who believed in a form of reincarnationism, that in his opinion (in the Cardinal's opinion) it had never really been formally condemned.

Mr. Judge called reincarnation the "lost chord of Christianity," and it is clear that Dr. MacGregor agrees. It might be added that more than one *Path* article by Mr. Judge shows that reincarnation is somewhat more plain in the Bible than the philosophy professor suggests.

Biological Delusions

The misleading character of merely biological certainties is beginning to be understood by the biologists themselves. In *The Entropy Law and the Economic Process* (Harvard University Press, 1971), Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen comments on the delusions of grandeur that may overtake biologists who suppose that

their knowledge includes all they need to know. Writing of the current interest in gene manipulation and other ways of interfering with the processes of heredity, this thoughtful scholar says:

> The capital sin of biologism (as well as of any social scientism) is the refusal to see that in a domain where prediction is impossible it is foolhardy to believe that there are means by which man can achieve *some chosen ends and only these*. In this respect, just as in ordinary life, man cannot get something for nothing. The only difference is the price to be paid for achieving the biosocial ends through some man-made scheme cannot be known in advance. And the danger of any ism is that we may discover only too late that, in spite of the sales talk of the overeager scientist, there is a price to be paid and that the price is much greater than what we have been induced to buy. Molecular biologists and biochemists are more prone to biologism. Consummate biologists are, on the contrary, much more likely to warn us that our present knowledge is "palpably insufficient to devise (genetic) remedies, about which we could be confident that the remedy will not be worse than the disease."

"Body Transplant"!

Another biologist—James Shapiro, who in the sixties headed a team which succeeded in isolating a "pure gene"—expresses outrage concerning the misuse of scientific knowledge. He condemned as "unscientific" those who "dump pesticides on Vietnam . . . perform heart transplants without first learning about rejection, and give masses of antibiotics to people who don't need them." Prof. Georgescu-Roegen adds this comment:

> In shocking contrast, only a few weeks thereafter Christiaan Barnard—as reported by the press—declared that "At Capetown, what I am aiming at is the brain transplant." Had he thought about this project beyond the purely surgical dexterity, he would have certainly said "body transplant." My point is that, in the operation Barnard is hoping to achieve, it is the brain's donor, not the brain's recipient, whose life is saved. Barnard will centainly not be able to save the life of a genial scholar struck by a fatal cerebral tumor, for example, by transplanting the brain of a moron donor.

It seems that the "ninth wave of common sense"—which H.P.B. said would awaken scientists to their errors—is now at work.

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